



THIS WEEK AT THE THEATRES

SALT LAKE THEATRE.—Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and matinee, Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Milton Royle in "Friends"; Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Christmas matinee, Richard Golden in "Foxy Quiller".

GRAND THEATRE.—Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and matinee, "Down by the Sea"; Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Christmas matinee, "A Little Outcast".

THE history of "Friends," which the Royles bring home this week, after an absence of several years, is of special interest to Salt Lake, not only because this was the home of its author, but for the further reason that the play was originally produced on the stage of the Salt Lake theatre.

Mr. Royle, being out of an engagement, was spending his time in Newark, N. J., when he conceived the idea of his first play. He finished it in a few months and with the manuscript in his pocket he marched proudly to Broadway, where, like all young authors, he expected the managers would be hanging out of their office windows awaiting his arrival. Strange to say, they were not. "Friends" met the same fate as other good plays. It was buffeted around among the managers for weeks and weeks, each one rejecting it. Mr. Royle says, without even reading it over. But the author was not easily discouraged. He buttonholed Nat Goodwin one evening and read the first act to the comedian. Goodwin wouldn't listen to the rest of it, although, after its New York production, he wanted to buy the piece. He doesn't know to this day that he rejected "Friends," which had another title then, after hearing the first act. Sick at heart over his final failure to interest the hard-headed and mercenary New York managers, Mr. Royle and Lucius Henderson boarded the train for Salt Lake, bringing "Friends" along. Arriving here, the matter was taken up with the Home Dramatic company, and the famous old organization agreed to produce it. Mr. Royle, Mr. Henderson, Governor Wells, J. Spencer, B. S. Young, Edith Clawson Knowlton and Mrs. Cummings were in the cast, and the production proved a rattling success.

After this, with comparatively little effort, Mr. Royle secured for his play a New York hearing, even though he had to practically pay for the bare walls \$2,000 per week. The young manager engaged E. J. Henley, at that time one of the foremost juvenile actors of America, for the leading role, but Mr. Henley on the opening night did not appear at the theatre, and was nowhere to be found. (This is often a habit with good actors.) Mr. Royle was pushed into the part at the last minute. All the comedy had been frightened out of him, but he got through and was credited with a fine show.

"Friends" was made from that night. The play was taken on tour. The author married his leading lady the first season and has been gently led by her ever since. For six years they played "Friends," then went into vaudeville, while the first play from Royle's pen has been done by stock companies all over the land. There is a greater demand for the piece by stock companies, play agents declare, than any other of his class.

The regular Sunday night concert takes place at the Grand tonight. The band has a number of new selections. The soloists are Mrs. F. N. Hoxey, pianist, and J. M. McMahon, trombone.

Though it has been told many times before, there is a bit of polite sarcasm attributed to Playwright Augustus Thomas which is well worth repetition for the benefit of those who have missed it.

It occurred during a dinner at the Lambs' club, at which Marshall P. Wilder, the diminutive, was a speaker. When he arose and placed his hand upon the table in the approved style of after-dinner speakers, his head wasn't very much above the top of the wine glasses. He had not proceeded beyond the usual nervous introduction to his remarks when Thomas interrupted him, and declared, in severe tones:

"Mr. Wilder, it is customary for a speaker to rise when he is addressing the members of this club."

Once upon a time Robert Edison was called to Hartford, Conn., to confer with Charles Jefferson, eldest son of Joseph Jefferson, and at that time manager and exploiter general of a tank drama called "The Dark Secret." Preceding their business talk Jefferson, with some show of pride, detailed the wonders of "The Dark Secret" to the young actor, and explained that the tank, which was a genuine affair, contained thousands of gallons of water, and that the hero's dive in rescuing the heroine and her child was most realistic. They were standing at the rear of the auditorium. The theatre in Hartford at that time was situated over a large saloon run by a

sibly obtainable, and with the most elaborate and artistic mounting, the problem play does not last. Olga Nethercole, Mrs. Fiske and Louise must all of them produce a new play every season or lose their hold upon the public interest.

Such is the view of Mr. Royle, and in which Mrs. Royle thoroughly agrees, neither of them having ever presented or assisted in presenting anything but the most wholesome in the drama—the only sort of drama which will stand wear. "Friends" had its original production in Salt Lake and its story is in all probability too well known to need detailed description. The Royles have not presented it in many seasons, but in returning to it this year Mr. Royle has much improved the play, and both he and his charming wife are acting it with mature judgment and such consummate skill as to win the best approbation of both press and public.

A genuine beauty chorus is one of the features of the "Foxy Quiller" Opera company, which appears in this city, opening Christmas day at the Salt Lake theatre. Manager Ben Stern has created considerable commendation among stage managers of the big New York musical productions by inducing their most conspicuous show girls to forsake the glories of a metropolitan engagement to join his company. It cost Mr. Stern some money to accomplish this purpose, but the result cannot fail to be gratifying to theatre-goers in the town. The "Foxy Quiller" Opera company will visit. Forty prettier women than those who nightly sing the melodious choruses of De Koven and Smith's opera would be hard to find.

Beauty has its charm, but even a bevy of handsome women cannot alone make an operatic company successful. This fact was not lost sight of by Mr. Stern in making up the roster of his organization. Such well known artists as Richard Golden, Adolph Zink, Miss Capria Gilman and Miss Daisy Hamlin were engaged to interpret the principal characters.

Mr. De Koven's music is by far the best that he has yet contributed to comic opera. The score is particularly rich in melody, but there is also much that requires the very best talent that can be secured for the lighter form of musical entertainment. It was written for a great organization, and the "Foxy Quiller" Opera company was expressly assembled to fill its requirements. Richard Golden will be seen as Foxy Quiller, a moment of blundering conceit, a detective who sails through the entire opera without arriving at a single correct conclusion.

"Down by the Sea" is one of Mortimer Murdoch's most popular stories, and has been an immense success as a play in England for the past eight years. For its presentation in this country the story has been slightly changed and the action now takes place on a long island shore of the English coast. One need only witness the production of this charming play to be assured that the drama does not lack in interest or in dramatic effect. Every character is so powerfully drawn that even the smallest demands exceptional ability to be faithfully portrayed. The play is of the interesting and strongly written, and is told in a pleasing manner. The characters are drawn from real life, and the language in which it is told is good idiomatic English with here and there touches of poetic beauty. The play will be staged with entirely new and elaborate scenic effects and many novel specialties will punctuate the action of the drama. The engagement is for Dec. 22, 23, 24 and matinee Wednesday at 5 p. m. at the Grand.

That general factotum of the theatre—the treasurer—is the receiver general of all sorts of complaints. He must be a man who can gracefully present the other cheek, else he is unable to hold his job. Sometimes he is possessed of a humor which is cutting. Frequently he is sarcastic. But whatever his replies to the angry patrons, he offers them so politely that, as the song goes, they are music to the ears.

In a Pittsburgh theatre recently a lady approached the box office and angrily demanded:

"What do you mean, sir, by giving me a big fat man a seat right in front of me? Do you suppose I can see through him? I certainly cannot see over or around him."

"I did not know who was going to be in front of you, madam," replied the treasurer.

"Well, he's there, and I wish you to get him away," stated the aggrieved one, with great emphasis.

"I cannot do that, madam. He paid for the seat and has a right to it."

"You cannot? You have no right to put stout people in front seats. You ought to make them take the rear rows."

"I don't know. You are getting a little stout yourself, madam. Perhaps some day you will be in the rear-seat class. How would you like that?"

"I didn't come here to be insulted, sir," the indignant woman tartly responded, as she bounced away.

One of the melodramas in Chicago last week was called "In Convict Stripes." One of the players in the play was H. Scott Higgins. When he was a younger man Mr. Higgins wanted to be a comedian. He felt that he was funny, and his friends encouraged him in the belief. While looking for an engagement he saw an "ad" in a dramatic paper of a medicine show that desired a comedian. He wired the manager for the position, asking "What salary do you pay?"

"Six dollars a week and board," wired the manager.

Higgins, feeling hurt, rushed to the telegraph office and quickly sent the following: "The Western Union refuses to send a message with my opinion of you."

He collapsed when he received the following from the manager, collect: "Try the Postal."

PRESS AGENT'S PROMISE.

"Friends," that wonderfully successful comedy drama by Edwin Milton Royle, in which Mr. and Mrs. Royle will be seen at the Salt Lake theatre next Monday evening for three nights and a matinee, is not that long-sought quantity—"the great American drama." It does not purport to be. It is, however, a work which has commanded almost complete approbation. It is modern and yet it is not based on sexual sin. The noblest feelings of the human heart, the true friendship of man for man, is its theme, and there it gives the lie to the theory that only the impure is of present interest. Mr. Royle has long been of the opinion that the problem play had no honest place upon the stage and that it was only dragged on by the force of great but misguided genius in author and player.

"None but a very great author may dare to write, and none but a very great actress may dare to present one of those questionable things, and even then, with such a combination of genius, and with the best cast pos-

he made changes in a play that had been so unmistakably successful as "Friends." "Well," he said, "I don't think you will blame me when you know what the changes are. You see ten years ago when I wrote 'Friends,' I was ten years younger and full of poetry and I had not met Mrs. Royle, so it did not seem quite so difficult to hand over Marguerite every night to the other fellow. You see Karje, that's the other fellow, has had her now ten years and it occurred to me that it was my (Jack Padden's) inning. I

been successfully launched. Richard Mansfield has turned to consideration of what he will do to follow his production of "Julius Caesar." It is likely that his next effort will be a big scenic production of "Othello," in which he will be seen as Iago.



have thought it over carefully in the light of my nine years of wedded life to the lady and now at every performance you can see me getting the girl and living happy ever after."

SMALL TALK.

"Huckleberry Finn," the play founded on Mark Twain's story, has been withdrawn for the season by the syndicate. The usual explanation is given that "time for the piece cannot be had in the theatres." This, from the trust, is laughable.

Now that his New York season has

ometh." Mr. Sothorn has the privileges of shooting Welsh rabbits on his newly acquired estate, but it's up to him to pronounce the name.

Hall Caine is to have another play of his used by Liebler & Co. this season. "The Manxman," Wilson Barrett brought "The Manxman" to this country several years ago and produced it with much success. James O'Neill, who recently closed his season in "The Honor of the Humble" is in New York rehearsing this piece and expects to open Christmas week with the new production.



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Thursday Matinee, Dec. 25

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Three Nights, Beginning Monday, Dec. 22

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